

02/11/98
JCS15 U.S. PTO

Case Docket No. PHN 16,219

A

THE COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS, Washington, D.C. 20231

Enclosed for filing is the patent application of Inventor(s):
JOHANNES F.M. D'ACHARD VAN ENSCHUT

For: A METHOD FOR OPERATING A VIDEO GAME WITH BACKFEEDING A VIDEO
IMAGE OF A PLAYER, AND A VIDEO GAME ARRANGED FOR PRACTISING THE
METHOD

ENCLOSED ARE:

- ☒ Appointment of Associates;
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement, Form PTO-1449 and copies of documents listed therein;
- ☒ Preliminary Amendment;
- ☒ Specification (7 Pages of Specification, Claims, & Abstract);
- ☒ Declaration and Power of Attorney:
(1 Page of a [] fully executed [X] unsigned Declaration);
- ☒ Drawing (1 sheet of [] informal [X] formal sheets);
- ☒ Certified copy of EUROPEAN application Serial No. 97200421.2;
- ☒ Authorization Pursuant to 37 CFR §1.136(a)(3)
- ☐ Other: ;
- ☐ Assignment to .

FEE COMPUTATION

CLAIMS AS FILED				
FOR	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE	BASIC FEE - \$790.00
Total Claims	8 - 20 =	0	X \$22 =	0.00
Independent Claims	2 - 3 =	0	X \$82 =	0.00
Multiple Dependent Claims, if any			\$270 =	0.00
TOTAL FILING FEE				= \$790.00

Please charge Deposit Account No. 14-1270 in the amount of the total filing fee indicated above, plus any deficiencies. The Commissioner is also hereby authorized to charge any other fees which may be required, except the issue fee, or credit any overpayment to Account No. 14-1270.

[] Amend the specification by inserting before the first line as a centered heading --Cross Reference to Related Applications--; and insert below that as a new paragraph --This is a continuation-in-part of application Serial No. , filed .--, which is herein incorporated by reference--.

CERTIFICATE OF EXPRESS MAILING

Express Mail Mailing Label No. EM352554025US
Date of Deposit 2/11/98
I hereby certify that this paper and/or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 C.F.R. 1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231.

Fran Sofo
Typed Name

Fran Sofo
Signature

Michael E. Marion
Michael E. Marion, Reg. 32,266
Attorney
(914) 333-9641
U.S. Philips Corporation
580 White Plains Road
Tarrytown, New York 10591
S:\SEMTO4SECO.S00

[illegible]

Atty. Docket

PHN 16,219

Group Art Unit

Examiner:

Honorable Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

MICHEAL E. MARION (Registration No. 32,266)

ALL CORRESPONDENCE CONCERNING THIS APPLICATION AND THE
LETTERS PATENT WHEN GRANTED SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE UNDERSIGNED
ATTORNEY OF RECORD.

~~Respectfully,~~

Dated at Tarrytown, New York
this 2nd day of February, 1998.

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of

Atty. Docket

JOHANNES F.M. D'ACHARD VAN ENSCHUT

PHN 16,219

Serial No.

Group Art Unit:

Filed: CONCURRENTLY

Examiner:

A METHOD FOR OPERATING A VIDEO GAME WITH BACKFEEDING A VIDEO IMAGE
OF A PLAYER, AND A VIDEO GAME ARRANGED FOR PRACTISING THE METHOD

Honorable Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Sir:

Prior to calculation of the filing fee and examination,
please amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 3,	line 1,	change "Claims 1 or 2" to --Claim 1--.
Claim 4,	line 1,	change "Claims 1 or 2" to --Claim 1--.
Claim 5,	line 1,	change "any of Claims 1 to 4" to --Claim 1--.
Claim 8,	line 1,	change "Claims 6 or 7" to --Claim 6--.

IN THE ABSTRACT

Page 7, before line 1, delete in its entirety and
substitute the following centered
heading:

--ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE--;

REMARKS

The claims and abstract have been amended to add headings in accordance with MPEP Section 601 and to delete multiple dependencies. No new matter has been added.

The above amendments are submitted to place this application in proper U.S. format. Entry is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

By 

Michael E. Marion, Reg. 32,266
Attorney
(914) 333-9641
February 3, 1998

S:\SE\PT03SEA0.SOR

A method for operating a video game with backfeeding a video image of a player, and a video game arranged for practising the method.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates to a method for operating a video game, said method comprising the steps of:

- enabling a player to interact with a gaming environment,
- 5 machine-detecting a score and/or performance of the player in a particular session,

backfeeding into the gaming environment a representation of said score and/or performance in visual form through an item that identifies the player in question.

- A method of this kind is known from GB 2,205,188. Generally, the game may be an arcade
- 10 game, a PC-based game that gets its software on a local CD-ROM player, or a network-based game that operates off-line and get its software through downloading. Various other configurations of such gaming environment are feasible. In a network environment, the game may be conducted off-line with a single player, off-line with multiple players, or even on-line with multiple players. The realization of the environment may be as conventional as a fruit
 - 15 machine, or high tech through using virtual reality features.

- Various people have seen the advantage of rewarding players in video games with the presentation of their identity. The above reference uses a printed ticket for outputting the name of a player alone or in combination with an attained score. The present invention has recognized that present day technology can attain a much higher degree of
- 20 liveliness, especially in view of falling prices of various devices. In particular, video aspects of such a gaming environment have been experienced as being interesting to user persons.

SUMMARY TO THE INVENTION

- Amongst other things, it is therefore an object to present the player with a
- 25 lifelike or video image of him or herself. Accordingly, the invention is characterized by automatically taking up a video image of the player in question as said representation for subsequent video display in said gaming environment. Compared with the remaining elements of the gaming environment that often comprise a great amount of electromechanical hardware, the price of a camera has fallen dramatically. Furthermore, confrontation of a

player with an other person's image being displayed in the actual gaming environment, has been felt as extremely tantalizing. The nature of the image may be a photograph or even a dynamic clip of the player.

Advantageously, the invention comprises a ranking step among players in
5 respectively successive playing sessions, and displaying images of high-ranking players in a relatively persistent manner with respect to subsequent playing sessions. In this manner, competition among various players is raised still further. Top players could have a display that is persistent over a relatively long period, such as one day or even one week.

Advantageously, for use in a multiple player environment, the video
10 image is selectively and cross-wise fed back to said multiple players. This enhances the competitive character of such a game still further: for example in a car-racing environment all players could have the face of the leading driver on their display during further racing.

Advantageously, the video image is made part of a composite image
together with selective items taken from memory. Such item could relate to a characteristic
15 attire worn in the real-life counterpart of the game, such as a space suit, or a particular interesting person related or not to the gaming environment in question, such as President Clinton or movie star Debi Moore.

Advantageously, the player person is allowed to suppress during the
session a presentation of said actual score and/or performance to said backfeeding
20 mechanism. This allows a person to remain anonymous if required; the realization can be effected through answering a system question by a keyboard command.

The invention also relates to a video game arranged for practising the
above method. Further advantageous aspects of the invention are recited in dependent
Claims.

25

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

These and other aspects and advantages of the invention will be discussed
more in detail with reference to the disclosure of preferred embodiments hereinafter, and in
particular with reference to the Figures wherein:

30

Figure 1 is a block diagram of a multi-player environment;

Figure 2 is an instantaneous representation of a game image together with
a player image.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

090213-03198

Figure 1 is a block diagram of a multi-player environment. At left is the setup for the first player person. Here, item 22 symbolizes the user interface. As shown, it is a multikey-keyboard. However, various other such interfaces have become known, such as a joystick, a steering wheel, an electronic pinball interface as recited in US Application Serial
5 No. 08/823,577 (PHN 15.755) to the present assignee. In particular, the interface may be bidirectional. The signals from the user interface are sent to the local processing device 24. This local processing device generates an image on display 20. Furthermore, it sends a control signal to local camera arrangement 26 that is focused through lens 28 on the local player, or at least on a position where this player is supposed to be. The camera is attached
10 for sending the image information to local processing device 24. Now, in a stand-alone setup the processing device 24 calculates the score of the player. This score may represent the number of hits in a shooting game, the number of points and/or jackpot hits in a pinball machine environment, or other scores as applicable. In certain circumstances such as the gaining of a particular number of points, processing device 24 may transmit a command to
15 camera 26 so that an image of the player is taken up through appropriate focus and direction of lens 28. The image signals are digitized and transferred to central processing device 24 for more or less persistent storage in local memory that has not been shown separately. If the player would object against taking this image, at the beginning of the gaming session an appropriate command must be given upon a machine-generated question.

20 In a subsequent gaming session, the image so taken up can be displayed on display 20, for example, at the start of the session, or rather, during the evolution of the game as specified in the gaming rules. In case a plurality of pictures have been taken up during successive gaming sessions the processing device 24 through some kind of ranking mechanism may give preference to the image of a particular player in favour of other
25 images. The ranking mechanism may be permanent, for example in that always the top player of the last week has his image displayed. Other ranking strategies could introduce some random character in that the selection is made among a plurality of images.

At right in the Figure a similar setup is shown with corresponding items 30, 32, 34, 36 and 38. First, this second game could also represent a stand-alone
30 environment. Alternatively, competition between two simultaneous players could be introduced in that the two processing devices 24 and 34 are joined through some interconnection mechanism 40. The latter could be a local network, an interconnection to the Internet system or any appropriate item. Now, the two gaming sessions can be joined to each other, for example, in a racing duel. For example, the camera could take up the images of

the driver that actually leads the pack, for display on all displays 20, 30. An alternative is that the images may actually figure in the game in that they actually become part of the game. For example, in a boxing game, the highest ranking player of a recent past could be superposed to the image of the actual player's opponent.

5 Figure 2 is an actual image of a racing game. The display device 60 has been shown with the actual image screen 62 in its centre. The image first contains the dashboard 64 of the driver (=player) in question. In front of the actual car the road 66 to be taken has been shown. Far out in front can be seen the car 68 of the driver that leads the pack. In the upper part of the screen, that may have a different aspect ratio from the one
10 shown here, various game parameters are displayed. First, field 70 shows the lag of the driver in question behind the leading driver, second field 72 shows an image of the face of the driver who is actually in front, and field 74 shows the driver that has covered the overall racing circuit in the shortest time. If the present player himself is actually leading the pack, either the field for the image of the leading driver is empty, or the image of the actual driver
15 is displayed.

At the end of the session, the image of the victorious driver may be printed, together with a textual identifier such as name or initials, and further relevant data, such as actual score, calender date, names of other players and their respective scores, etcetera. A particular feature is to join the image of the victorious driver with another image,
20 or even a clip taken from memory. By itself, the joining of images into a single picture is known technology, that is made easier and more natural if the camera through good focusing creates an image that has a well-defined circumference, so that a particular "hole" may be filled with an image taken from memory. The printing may be on paper or similar material, or even on a CD-ROM rewritable, if the game program had been provided on such support.
25 The printing may be effected remotely, such as on only one of the networked terminals of Figure 1. If applicable, the display may be in the form of a short movie fragment or so-called clip.

CLAIMS:

1. A method for operating a video game, said method comprising the steps of:
 - enabling a player to interact with a gaming environment,
 - machine-detecting a score and/or performance of the player in a particular session,
 - backfeeding into the gaming environment a representation of said score and/or performance in visual form through an item that identifies the player in question,
 - said method being characterized by automatically taking up a video image of the player in question as said representation for subsequent video display in said gaming environment.
 2. A method as claimed in Claim 1, furthermore comprising a ranking step among players in respectively successive playing sessions, and displaying an image of one or more high-ranking players in a relatively persistent manner with respect to subsequent playing sessions.
 3. A method as claimed in Claims 1 or 2, for use in a multiple player environment, wherein said video image is selectively cross-wise fed back to said multiple players.
 4. A method as claimed in Claims 1 or 2, wherein said video image is made part of a composite image with one or more selected items taken from memory.
 5. A method as claimed in any of Claims 1 to 4, and allowing said player to suppress during said session a presentation of said actual score, performance and/or video image to said backfeeding.
 6. A video game system being arranged for running a video gaming environment, comprising a user interface for enabling a player to interact with the gaming environment, detection means for detecting a score and/or performance of the player in question, backfeeding means for backfeeding into the gaming environment a representation of said score and/or performance in visual form through an item that identifies the player in question,
- characterized by having camera means for automatically taking up a video

image of the player in question as said representation for subsequent video display in said gaming environment.

7. A system as claimed in Claim 6, furthermore comprising ranking means for relatively ranking players in respectively successive playing sessions, and control means
- 5 fed by said ranking means for displaying images of high-ranking players in a relatively persistent manner with respect to subsequent playing sessions.
8. A system as claimed in Claims 6 or 7, arranged for implementing a multiple player gaming environment, and having cross-wise communication means for selectively cross-wise backfeeding said video image to said multiple players.

090221 0949

ABSTRACT:

A method for operating a video game with backfeeding a video image of a player, and a video game arranged for practising the method.

- In a video gaming environment, a player is enabled to interact with the environment. Further, a score and/or performance of the player in a particular session is machine detected and fed fed back into the gaming environment and a representation of said score and/or performance is displayed in visual form through an item that identifies the
- 5 player in question. In particular, the method automatically takes up a video image of the player in question as said representation for subsequent video display in said gaming environment.

090213 0 22060

1/1

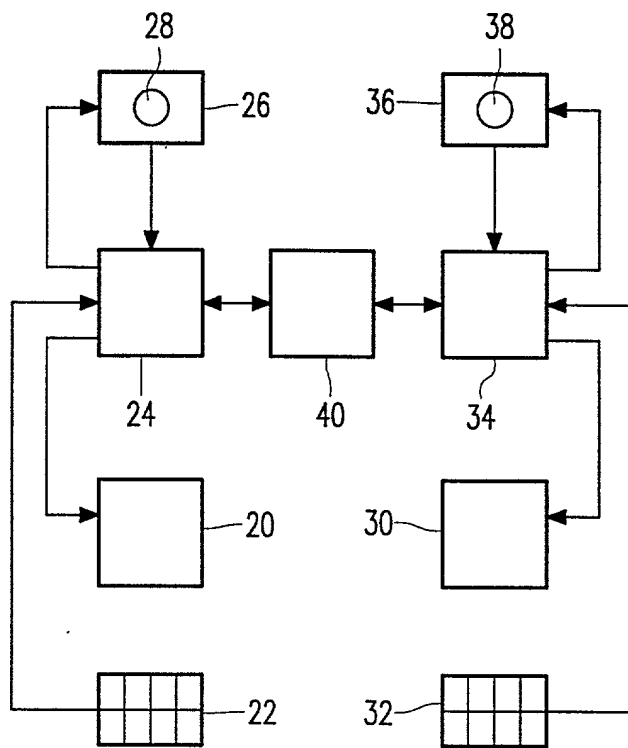


FIG. 1

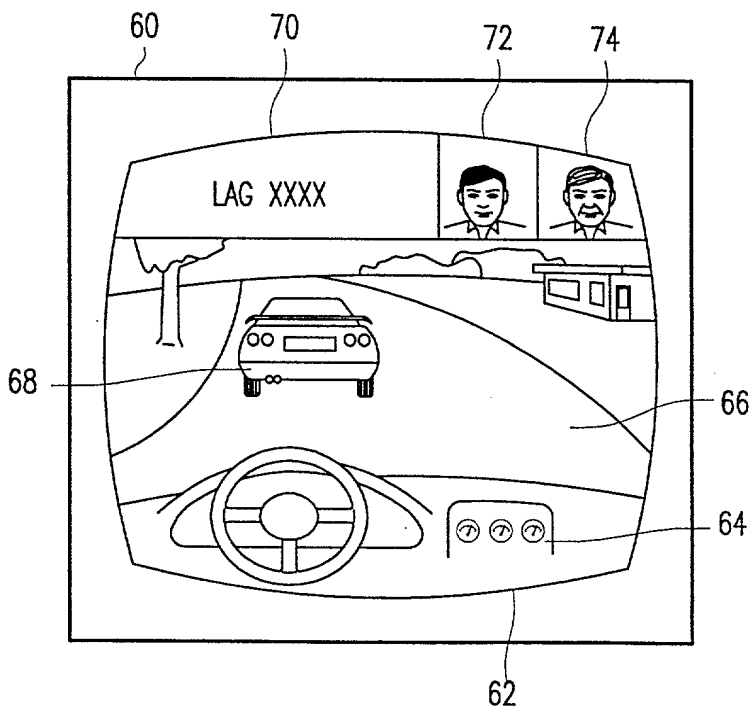


FIG. 2

2024-04-22 14:22:00

DECLARATION and POWER OF ATTORNEY

ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NO.:

PHN 16.219

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled **"A method for operating a video game with backfeeding a video image of a player, and a video game arranged for practising the method"**

the specification of which (check one)

☐ is attached hereto.☐ was filed on _____ as Application Serial No. _____ and was amended on _____ (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by the amendment(s) referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a).

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, § 119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

PRIOR FOREIGN APPLICATION(S)

COUNTRY	APP. NUMBER	DATE OF FILING (DATE, MONTH, YEAR)	PRIORITY CLAIMED UNDER 35 U.S.C. 119
Europe	97200421.2	14 February 1997	YES

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, §120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35 United States Code, §112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a) which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

PRIOR UNITED STATES APPLICATION(S)

APPLICATION SERIAL NUMBER	FILING DATE	STATUS (PATENTED, PENDING, ABANDONED)

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

POWER OF ATTORNEY: As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith. (list name and registration number)

Algy Tamoshunas, Reg. No. 27,677

Jack E. Haken, Reg. No. 26,902

SEND CORRESPONDENCE TO: Corporate Patent Counsel; U.S. Philips Corporation; 580 White Plains Road; Tarrytown, NY 10591		DIRECT TELEPHONE CALLS TO: (name and telephone No.) (914) 332-0222	
Dated:		Inventor's Signature:	
Full Name of Inventor	Last Name D'ACHARD VAN ENSCHUT	First Name Johannes	Middle Name F.M.
Residence & Citizenship	City Eindhoven	State or Foreign Country The Netherlands	Country of Citizenship The Netherlands
Post Office Address	Street Groenewoudseweg 1	City 5621 BA Eindhoven	State or Country The Netherlands Zip Code
Dated:		Inventor's Signature:	
Full Name of Inventor	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name
Residence & Citizenship	City	State or Foreign Country	Country of Citizenship
Post Office Address	Street	City	State or Country Zip Code

050022132-01198